

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 SAM-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 NIC-01 AF-04 /081 W

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R 271105Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7800

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, LY, SY, UR, CH, TS

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI REPORTS ON TUNISIA'S
FOREIGN RELATIONS

REF: TUNIS 7845

1. DECEMBER 24 PRESS CARRIED FULLER TEXT OF FOREIGN
MINISTER CHATTI'S STATEMENT OF TUNISIA'S FOREIGN
POLICY DURING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CONSIDERATION OF
1975 GOT BUDGET. IN ADDITION TO POINTS COVERED
RADIO (SEE REFTEL), CHATTI IS QUOTED ON TUNISIAN
RELATIONS WITH LIBYA, EASTERN ARAB STATES, EUROPE,
THE SOVIET UNION, CANADA, THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF
CHINA, AND JAPAN. US NOT MENTIONED EXCEPT IN PASSING.

2. RE LIBYA, CHATTI SAID THAT RELATIONS HAVE BEEN
FROZEN BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES OVER INTERPRETATION
OF JERBA DECLARATION. HE SAID THAT LIBYA HAS SUB-
ORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION TO
THE RATIFICATION OF CERTAIN CONVENTIONS AND HAS NOT
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RESPONDED TO TUNISIAN SUGGESTION THAT DIFFERENCES

OVER DELINEATION OF CONTINENTAL SHELF FRONTIER BE SUBMITTED TO ARBITRATION. CHATTI NOTED THAT RECENT LIBYAN DELEGATION TO TUNISIA INQUIRING ON STATUS OF UNIFICATION HAD BEEN TOLD THAT GOT REMAINS FAITHFUL TO ITS PROMISES AND HAD SUBMITTED PROPOSED CHANGES IN CONSTITUTION TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO PERMIT HOLDING OF REFERENDUM ON UNIFICATION. HE ADDED THAT GOT AWAITS LIBYAN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ON APPARENT JURIFICAL CONFLICT BETWEEN LIBYA'S UNIFICATION PROJECTS WITH TUNISIA, EGYPT, AND SYRIA. CHATTI CLOSED HIS DISCUSSION OF ISSUE BY NOTING GOT POSITION THAT UNIFICATION SHOULD ENCOMPASS WHOLE MAGHREB.

3. ADDRESSING HIMSELF TO EASTERN ARAB STATES, CHATTI SAID TUNISIA HAS EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH ALL. HE MADE SPECIAL MENTION OF SYRIA AND ANNOUNCED THAT PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA WILL MAKE AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO DAMASCUS ON JANUARY 2. CHATTI ALSO NOTED GOT RELATIONS WITH GULF STATES AND ENUMERATED RECENTLY CONCLUDED BILATERAL ECONOMIC AID PROJECTS CONCLUDED WITH KUWAIT AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.

4. TURNING TO EUROPE, CHATTI SAID TUNISIA ENJOYS GOOD RELATIONS AND HAS ESTABLISHED MIXED COMMISSIONS TO ACTIVATE COMMERCIAL RELATIONS. REGARDING EASTERN EUROPE, CHATTI SAID GOT IS SATISFIED WITH THE CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL RELATIONS THAT IT HAS WITH PRACTICALLY ALL THE COUNTRIES IN THAT REGION. HE NOTED THAT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA HAS BEEN INVITED TO VISIT THE SOVIET UNION IN THE SPRING. REGARDING CANADA, CHATTI SAID GOT IS SATISFIED WITH RELATIONS WHICH HAVE INCLUDED CONCESSIONAL LENDING AND CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN DAM CONSTRUCTION PROJECT. ON RELATIONS WITH PRC, CHATTI SAID THEY ARE EXCELLENT, AS SHOWN BY 20 MILLION DINAR LOAN AND INVITATIONS FOR PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AND PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA TO VISIT CHINA. FINALLY, CHATTI SAID THAT TUNISIA AND JAPAN MAY SOON WIDEN SCOPE OF THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND OPENING OF EMBASSY IN TOKYO.

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5. COMMENT: AS NOTED IN REFTTEL, CHATTI'S STATEMENT TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BROKE NO NEW GROUND. UNLIKE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS BEFORE PARTY CONGRESS AT MONASTIR IN WHICH HE MENTIONED US SEVERAL TIMES IN VERY FAVORABLE TERMS, CHATTI'S ONLY MENTION OF UNITED STATES IN STATEMENT WAS REFERRAL TO REMARK OF SECRETARY KISSINGER DURING RECENT VISIT IN TUNIS

IN WHICH HE PRAISED PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA FOR HIS
ROLE IN "LIBERATION OF ANGOLA AND THE BATTLE AGAINST
COLONIALISM." WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, ATTRIBUTE ANY
PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO CHATTI'S LACK OF COMMENT
ABOUT RELATIONS WITH US WHICH REMAIN CORDIAL. IN-DEED, AS IS CUSTOMA
RILY THE CASE, PRESIDENT FORD'S
AID MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA WAS CARRIED IN
TOTO BY THE LOCAL MEDIA DEC 24.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TUNIS07899
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740375-0817
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974127/aaaaafgf.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 TUNIS 7845
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2002 by worrelsw>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI REPORTS ON TUNISIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, LY, SY, UR, CH, TS, (CHATTI, HABIB)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005